

What is claimed is:

1. A branched power transmission comprising: first and second planetary transmissions each including a sun gear, a planet gear, and a ring gear; a speed change mechanism having a continuously variable transmission ratio and an input side driven shaft and an output side driven shaft; wherein one gear of the first planetary transmission is non-rotatably connected with an input shaft and the first planetary transmission provides a rotational connection between the input shaft, the input side driven shaft, and the output side driven shaft; and wherein one gear of the second planetary transmission is non-rotatably connected with an output shaft and the second planetary transmission provides a rotational connection between the output shaft, the input side driven shaft, and the output side driven shaft.

2. A transmission according to Claim 1, wherein the planetary transmissions are similarly configured.

3. A transmission according to Claim 1, wherein the transmission contains two substantially identically constructed assemblies, a first of which assemblies is the first planetary transmission and an input portion of the speed change mechanism, and a second of which assemblies is the second planetary transmission and an output portion of the speed change mechanism.

4. A transmission according to Claim 1, including a first and a second coupling device, wherein one gear of the first planetary transmission is in rotational

engagement with output side driven shaft through the first coupling device, and wherein one gear of the second planetary transmission is in rotational engagement with the input side driven shaft through the second coupling device.

5. A transmission according to Claim 1, wherein one gear of the first planetary transmission is in direct rotational engagement with the output side driven shaft, and one gear of the second planetary transmission is in direct rotational engagement with the input side driven shaft.

6. A transmission according to Claim 1, wherein the ring gear of the first planetary transmission is supported on the input side driven shaft, and the ring gear of the second planetary transmission is supported on the output side driven shaft.

7. A transmission according to Claim 1, including at least clutch for dividing the transmission ratio of at least one planetary transmission into two successive transmission ranges having continuously variable transmission ratios.